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SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 14 April 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to attach the texts of the statements issued on 25 March and 7 April 1999 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba in connection with the aggression by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (see annexes I and II).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 64 and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Bruno RODRÍGUEZ PARRILLA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex I

[Original: Spanish]

## Statement issued on 25 March 1999 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba on the NATO aggression against Yugoslavia

After a number of painful and much-manipulated political events, lengthy armed clashes and complex and non-transparent negotiations on the Kosovo issue, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) finally launched its announced brutal air attack on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, whose peoples were those that fought most heroically in Europe against the Nazi hordes in the Second World War.

This action, intended to "punish the Yugoslav Government", is being conducted outside of the United Nations Security Council, where the United States of America, as primary promoter of the aggression, would have had to face opposition from other members who, from the very beginning, have strongly opposed any action which would infringe on the prerogatives granted to that body by the Charter of the United Nations in order to guarantee international peace and security and which, by so doing, would entail a violation of the principles and norms of international law.

The war launched by NATO rekindles mankind's justifiable fears of the development of an outrageous unipolarity, ruled by a warmongering Empire self-appointed as a global police force and capable of dragging its political and military allies into the most insane actions, as was the case at the beginning and during the first half of this century with the creation of warlike blocs that swept Europe with destruction, death and poverty, dividing and weakening it while the United States strengthened its economic, political and military might.

It might be wondered whether the use and abuse of force will solve the world's problems and protect the human rights of the innocent people now dying under the missiles and bombs falling on a small country in a learned, civilized Europe.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba strongly condemns this United States-led NATO aggression against Yugoslavia and denounces the dark plots which have led to the continued prevalence of such uncivilized practices in the international political arena as a means of promoting the interests of those who persist in imposing their will on every State of the planet in the name of a new, ignominious world order created in its image and likeness.

At this time of grief and pain for the peoples of Yugoslavia, Cuba calls on the international community to mobilize its efforts to put an immediate end to this unjustified aggression and to prevent a further, even more regrettable loss of innocent lives, in order to allow this nation to resume the peaceful path of negotiating a solution to its internal problems, a matter solely and exclusively dependent on the sovereign will and self-determination of the Yugoslav peoples.

Cuba is concerned that the aggression may cause the conflict to spread unpredictably to other States of the region as a result of both the expansion of violence and its disturbing social and human consequences.

The ridiculous effort to impose solutions by force is incompatible with any civilized reasoning and with the basic principles of international law. The tough stance of those who try to justify this new crime is merely a reflection of the moral incapacity to accommodate ideas and policies, which go against their own interests, of the peoples involved in the conflict and the desire to impose the imperial will on them. Pursuit of this policy could lead to an unpredictable outcome for Europe and for all of humankind.

## Annex II

[Original: Spanish]

### Statement issued on 7 April 1999 by the Government of Cuba

Various views wrongly attributed to the Cuban Government have been disseminated with regard to the United States announcement of its decision to house Kosovar refugees in the territory of the Guantánamo Naval Base. It must therefore be made clear that such views are strictly personal.

The Government of Cuba has made absolutely no public statement on the issue.

From the very beginning, the Cuban Government's position has been totally different from what has been published. Bearing in mind that such a sensitive issue should be handled with all due discretion, it has refrained from making its views public.

In order to prevent useless misunderstandings regarding our country's position, we shall limit ourselves at present to stating the following:

From the moment that the current crisis broke out in Yugoslavia and NATO embarked on its brutal air strikes on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Cuba has strictly followed a principled policy of forceful condemnation of the aggression.

Within the limits of its modest capacities and without any desire for publicity or an active role, Cuba has remained convinced that the Serbs would stand up to the devastating attack by NATO; that no weapons system would be able to crush the resistance of those who, assailed from air and land but supported by their people, were willing to fight to the end, using adequate tactics to confront modern military technology; that they had already proved their bravery and fighting ability against the Nazi hordes during the Second World War; and that NATO had embarked on a course that would lead to an endless struggle and an unjustifiable, useless genocide in the very heart of Europe which the public opinion of that continent, and of the world, would not tolerate.

In every case, we have also conveyed to the appropriate persons our belief that the combat which had been initiated could be resolved only through political, rather than military, means and that, in view of the geographic and other realities, it was only through non-conventional (i.e., nuclear) weapons, whose use was inconceivable, that military support could be provided to Serbia from abroad.

Each passing day has demonstrated the validity of the Cuban position.

The first great tragedy, following the air strike unleashed against Yugoslavia on the night of 24 March and the immediate aggravation of the Kosovo conflict, was the massive exodus of the civilian population which the media have revealed to the world.

Hundreds of thousands of people, including children, the elderly, women and men, are already suffering the consequences of the fighting visibly and dramatically, and millions of other civilians in Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro have been living for the past two weeks in fear of the deafening explosions, destruction, fires and inevitable loss of human lives, both civilian and military, from the rain of bombs and missiles falling from all sides on the remainder of what was, until a few years ago, the prosperous, united Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia.

The mid-winter destruction of a thermoelectric plant that supplied electricity and heat to a million people and the assaults on similar facilities which provide vital services to the entire population are far from being a military objective and are becoming a case of genocide.

This statement in no way seeks to establish responsibility for what is happening or for the events leading thereto.

The innocent victims, whatever their nationality, ethnic group or religion, should receive every assistance both within and outside of Yugoslavia. Cuba resolutely supports such humanitarian aid, whatever the source. It will make no objection to, and is even willing to cooperate in, such efforts, wherever necessary, to the extent of its means.

Cuba supports with equal determination the urgent search for a reasonable, just solution to the conflict.

The war should end before the occurrence of even greater human, economic, political and military disasters of benefit to no one in the world.

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